

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A computer-based implementable method of playing media designed for playing on various types of media players comprising:

(a) providing a universal media player that includes an media player interface with user actuatable control buttons;

(b) determining whether incoming media to be played is playable by the universal media player; and

(i) if the incoming media to be played is playable by the universal media player, intercepting the incoming media and directing the incoming media to the universal media player; or

(ii) if the media to be played is not playable by the universal media player, allowing the incoming media to enable a default media player capable of playing the media.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein determining whether the incoming media to be played is playable by the universal media player comprises:

determining the media type of the incoming media; and

searching a table of media types to determine whether the media type of the incoming media is playable by the universal media player.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the table of media types is a MIME table.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the incoming media include audio and video files.

5. The method of Claim 1, further including cueing the media if the media is playable on the universal media player.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein cueing the media includes instantiating a media component for the incoming media.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the incoming media is a download from a media server.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the incoming media results from a user clicking on a URL link to a server that stores media.

9. The method of Claim 7, wherein the universal media player also plays media produced by a media disc.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the incoming media is controlled by a remote navigation event.

11. The method of Claim 1, wherein the universal media player also plays media in the form of a video telephone call.

12. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether the incoming media is ready to be played;
when the incoming media is ready to be played, initializing an idle media player;
and
directing the incoming media to the initialized idle media player.

13. The method of Claim 11, further comprising displaying an idle media player interface prior to when the incoming media is ready to be played.

14. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether the incoming media is ready to be played;
determining whether a current media player is playing media;
when the incoming media is ready to be played, if a current media player is playing media, stopping and hiding the current media player and initializing an idle media player; and
directing the incoming media to the initialized idle media player.

15. The method of Claim 14, wherein if the incoming media component is ready, it includes determining whether a time to establish connection has timed out.

16. The method of Claim 4, further comprising in response to determining that the incoming media is not ready to be played, if a current media player is playing the media, allowing the current media to continue playing media until the incoming media is ready to be played.

17. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining if the universal media player is remotely synchronized with another media player; and
if the universal media player is remotely synchronized with another media player, sending a remote navigation event to the other media player.

18. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether the incoming media is ready to be played;
when the incoming media is ready to be played, displaying an activated universal media player; and
in response to receiving a request from a user to play, the incoming media activating the universal media player to play the media.

19. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to change the volume of the media, changing the volume of the media.

20. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to change the size of the universal media player interface, changing the size of the universal media player interface.

21. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to pause the incoming media, pausing the playing of the incoming media.

22. The method of Claim 21, wherein, in response to receiving a request to pause the media, also sending a remote pause event signal.

23. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a remote pause event, pausing the playing of the incoming media.

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24. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to change to a previous track of the media, changing to the previous track of the media.

25. The method of Claim 27, wherein, in response to receiving a request to advance to the next track of the media, sending a remote next event signal.

26. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a remote previous event, changing to a previous track of the media.

27. The method of Claim 17, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to advance to a next track of the media, advancing to a next track of the media.

28. The method of Claim 27, wherein, in response to receiving a request to advance to the next track of the media, sending a remote next event signal.

29. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a remote next event, changing to the next track of the media.

30. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a request to stop playing the media, deactivating the media player to stop the playing of the media.

31. The method of Claim 30, wherein, in response to receiving a request to stop playing the media, sending a remote stop event signal.

32. The method of Claim 18, further comprising, in response to receiving a remote stop event, deactivating the media player to stop the playing of the media.

33. A computer-readable medium containing computer-implementable instructions for performing the method of any one of Claims 1-32.

34. A computer program for carrying out the computer-implementable method recited in any one of Claims 1-33 embedded in another computer program.

35. A computer program as claimed in Claim 34, wherein the other program is an Internet browser.

36. A computer program as claimed in Claim 35, wherein the interface of the universal media player is located in a persistent region of the interface of the Internet browser.

37. A computer program as claimed in Claim 36, wherein the interface of the Internet browser includes a frame and wherein the interface of the universal media player is located in the frame of the interface of the Internet browser.

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